Annual Production of Opium

1632. DR YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) what is the annual production of opium in the country;

(b) in which manner it is consumed—domestic and export; and

(c) what is the total revenue collected out of opium ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY) : (a) Production of opium in the country during the last 3 years was as follows :—

Year	Production of opium at 90°C in MTs
1989-90	437
1990-91	392
1991-92	495

(b) Opium is consumed within the country mainly for extraction of opiate alkaloids for medical use. A large quantity of opium is exported and it is put to similar use in the countries where it is exported.

(c) Total revenue receipts from sale of opium and its alkaloids during the last 3 years are as follows :—

Year	Revenue receipts (Rs. in crores)
1989-90	31.22
1990-91	53.02
1991-92	77.39

Cut in Import Duty on Capital Goods for Power Sector

1633. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government proposed to impose a cut in import duty on capital goods used in Power Sector;

(b) if so, how much loss of revenue Government expect on the investment in Power Sector during the next three years; and

(c) what are the details in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M. V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY) : (a) With effect from 28-2-93, as part of the Budget proposals for the year 1993-94, import duty on power projects has been reduced from 30% to 20%. This concessional rate of 20% has also been extended to machinery required for the modernisation and renovation of power plants.

(b) and (c) These proposals are likely to result in a revenue loss of approximately Rs. 68 crores in a full year.

Increase in LIC Business

1634. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) what was the Life Insurance Corporation's new business as on the 31st January, 1993;

(b) whether it has registered any increase in percentage as compared to the corresponding period of last year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof zone-wise and which zone has registered the highest growth rate in business indicating also whether any increase in the rate of Bonus to LIC Policy holders is likely to be given during the year 1993-94, if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED) : (a) The New Business completed by the Life Insurance Corporation of India during the current financial year from 1-4-1992 to 31-1-1993 is as follows :

No. of Policies	55,66,624
Sum Assured	Rs. 18,963.84 Crores, and
First Premium Income:	Rs. 497.10 crores.

(b) Yes, Sir. The increase in business in terms of percentage over the last year's business is as follows :

In number of policies	2.5%
In Sum Assured and	5.2%
In First Premium Income	9.4%

(c) A Statement showing zone-wise details of percentage growth rate is enclosed [*see* below] Bonus to be given LIC Policy holders will be decided only after the actuarial valuation of the assets and liabilities of the Corporation as at 31-3-1993 is made. It is, therefore, not possible at this stage to give the details in this regard.

Zone-wise Statement of Growth Rate

Zone	Business as at 31-1-1993			Growth Rate		
	Policies	S.A. (Crs.)	F.P. (Lacs)	Pols. %	S.A. %	F.P. %
Northern	704314	2902.36	9530.50	5.4	5.6	15.9
North Central	668702	2394.44	6736.63	6.1	1.5	12.3
Central	260921	924.24	2126.14	—8.6	—11.9	—6.8
Eastern	1024657	3294.33	8357.19	5.4	5.2	12.1
South Central	1007238	2975.07	7042.97	—1.4	6.9	3.2
Southern	830140	2560.70	5516.91	8.7	15.4	23.3
Western	1070652	3912.70	10400.15	—1.8	4.5	2.3
ALL INDIA	5566624	18963.84	49710.49	2.5	5.2	9.4

Rise in the Price of Essential Commodities

1635. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the prices of most of the essential commodities have gone up in the recent months;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(c) what is the wholesale and consumer price index position of essential commodities from the 1st January, 1991 to the 31st December, 1992 commodity-wise;

(d) the impact of increase in prices of petroleum products, issue prices of foodgrains and withdrawal of subsidy on chemical fertilizers on the price-index; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to check the rise in prices of essential commodities ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (DR. ABRAR AHMED) : (a) & (b) Out of 31 essential commodities the wholesale price of 13 items recorded a decline between August 1992 to January 1993. This decline is seen in rice, wheat, jowar, bajra, pulses, edible oils such as groundnut oil and mustard oil, vanaspati, chillies and potatoes. The composite index of all the 31 essential commodities dropped to 230.7 in January 1993 compared to 235.4 in August 1992. Similar trend was observed in respect of consumer price index for industrial workers where the latest available index for December 1992 was 234.7 as against 240.3 in August 1992.

(c) Wholesale Price Index and Consumer Price Index (for industrial workers) of essential commodities from January 1991 to latest available month is given in the Annexure [*See* Appendix CLXVI, Annexure No. 32].

(d) The direct impact of increase in administered prices on the current year's rate of inflation was 2.73%. The direct impact of increase in price of patroleum products was 1.2% and of fertilizers 0.77%. The impact of the revised issue prices of commodities supplied through public distribution system, namely, rice, wheat and sugar is estimated to be 0.22%.

(e) Strict control of fiscal deficit, tight monetary policy, augmentation of food supplies through timely imports and strengthening of public distribution system were some of the major steps taken by the Government to bring about reversal in the inflationary price trend that had characterised previous two years.